Remarks

Claims 1, 3-14, 16-26, and 28-45 are now pending in this application. Claims 2, 15, and 27 have been canceled without prejudice, waiver, or disclaimer. Claims 1, 12, 14, 19, 21, 25, and 28 have been amended. No new matter has been added. Claims 1-45 are rejected.

The rejection of Claims 1-3, 5, 6, 9-11, 13-19, 22, 23, and 25-28 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the service MatchMaker, referred to as Matchmaker, offered by www.grainger.com in view of "Manufacturing Marketplace opens for business on the WWW", referred to as Manufacturing Marketplace, is respectfully traversed.

Applicants assume that Claims 7, 8, 12, 20, 21 are rejected as being unpatentable over MatchMaker in view of Manufacturing Marketplace because the Office Action states on page 2, "The rejections as stated in the Non-Final Rejection(Paper # 18) are maintained." The non-final rejection states on page 5, "Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to store any data in the fields of the catalog – whether for a lamp, motor, air-conditioning unit or otherwise – for use in the product-finding Matchmaker system, as shown in Grainger, because such data does not functionally relate to the selection tool itself and merely labeling the data differently from that in the prior art would have been obvious matter of design choice...A similar analysis applies to claims 7, 8, 12, 20 and 21."

MatchMaker describes a method including selecting a search category, seeing a product or a list of products that match search criteria, and getting more information about a product/item by clicking on an item # (page 2). The method also includes choosing a search criteria that fits required specs from one of the categories (page 3).

Manufacturing Marketplace describes a service that guides through a series of questions with multiple choices (page 1). After making selections, a finder will search a product database

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for any matching products, which will then be displayed, many with links to a manufacturer's sites (page 1).

Claim 1 recites a method for production selection assistance, the method including "receiving a product category selection; matching the product category selection against a product database to determine a plurality of matched products; displaying a product matrix comprising a product entry for each of the matched products, each product entry comprising a model identifier and at least one product configuration parameter associated with the matched products; presenting a product configuration question relating to the at least one product configuration parameter displayed in the product matrix, wherein said presenting the product configuration question comprises presenting the product configuration question associated with a selected product configuration parameter chosen from the at least one product configuration parameter; receiving a product configuration answer; and responsively updating the product matrix based on the product configuration answer to eliminate at least one product entry in the product matrix, wherein said responsively updating comprises removing the selected product configuration parameter from the product matrix."

Neither MatchMaker nor Manufacturing Marketplace, considered alone or in combination, describe or suggest a method for production selection assistance recited in Claim 1. Specifically, neither MatchMaker nor Manufacturing Marketplace, considered alone or in combination, describe or suggest responsively updating the product matrix based on the product configuration answer to eliminate at least one product entry in the product matrix, where responsively updating includes removing the selected product configuration parameter from the product matrix. Rather, MatchMaker describes selecting a search category, seeing a product or a list of products that match search criteria, getting more information about a product/item by clicking on an item #, and choosing a search criteria that fits required specs from one of the categories. Manufacturing Marketplace describes guiding through a series of questions with multiple choices and after making selections, a finder searches a product database for any

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matching products. Accordingly, neither Matchmaker nor Manufacturing Marketplace, considered alone or in combination, describe or suggest responsively updating, where responsively updating includes removing the selected product configuration parameter from the product matrix. For the reasons set forth above, Claim 1 is submitted to be patentable over MatchMaker in view of Manufacturing Marketplace.

Claim 2 has been canceled. Claims 3 and 5-13 depend from independent Claim 1. When the recitations of Claims 3 and 5-13 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 1, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 3 and 5-13 likewise are patentable over MatchMaker in view of Manufacturing Marketplace.

Claim 14 recites a product selection assistance tool including "a communication interface; a processing circuit coupled to the communication interface; and a memory coupled to the processing circuit, the memory storing, for execution by the processing circuit, instructions for: receiving a product category selection over the communication interface; matching the product category selection against a product database to determine a plurality of matched products; displaying a product matrix comprising a product entry for each of the matched products, each product entry comprising a model identifier and at least one product configuration parameter associated with the matched products; presenting a product configuration question related to the at least one product configuration parameter displayed in the product matrix; receiving a product configuration answer; and responsively updating the product matrix based on the product configuration answer to eliminate at least one product entry in the product matrix, the product configuration question based on a selected product configuration parameter chosen from the at least one product configuration parameter, wherein the instructions for responsively updating include instructions to remove the selected product configuration parameter from the product matrix."

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Neither MatchMaker nor Manufacturing Marketplace, considered alone or in
combination, describe or suggest a product selection assistance tool as recited in Claim 14.
Specifically, neither MatchMaker nor Manufacturing Marketplace, considered alone or in
combination, describe or suggest the instructions for responsively updating include instructions
to remove the selected product configuration parameter from the product matrix. Rather,
MatchMaker describes selecting a search category, seeing a product or a list of products that
match search criteria, getting more information about a product/item by clicking on an item #,
and choosing a search criteria that fits required specs from one of the categories. Manufacturing
Marketplace describes guiding through a series of questions with multiple choices and after
making selections, a finder searches a product database for any matching products. Accordingly,
neither Matchmaker nor Manufacturing Marketplace, considered alone or in combination,
describe or suggest instructions to remove the selected product configuration parameter from the
product matrix. For the reasons set forth above, Claim 14 is submitted to be patentable over
MatchMaker in view of Manufacturing Marketplace.

Claim 15 has been canceled. Claims 16-18 depend from independent Claim 14. When
the recitations of Claims 16-18 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 14,
Applicants submit that dependent Claims 16-18 likewise are patentable over MatchMaker in
view of Manufacturing Marketplace.

Claim 19 recites a product selection assistance Internet web page including "a matrix
panel comprising a product matrix displaying a plurality of products using individual product
entries comprising a model identifier and at least one product configuration parameter associated
with the products; and a product configuration panel displaying a product configuration question
and accepting a product configuration answer, the product matrix responsively updating based on
the product configuration answer to eliminate at least one product entry in the product matrix,
wherein the product configuration question relates to the at least one product configuration
parameter displayed in the product matrix, the product configuration question based on a selected

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product configuration parameter chosen from the at least one product configuration parameter, and wherein the product matrix is responsively updated by removing the selected product configuration parameter from the product matrix."

Neither MatchMaker nor Manufacturing Marketplace, considered alone or in combination, describe or suggest a product selection assistance Internet web page as recited in Claim 19. Specifically, neither MatchMaker nor Manufacturing Marketplace, considered alone or in combination, describe or suggest the product matrix is responsively updated by removing the selected product configuration parameter from the product matrix. Rather, MatchMaker describes selecting a search category, seeing a product or a list of products that match search criteria, getting more information about a product/item by clicking on an item #, and choosing a search criteria that fits required specs from one of the categories. Manufacturing Marketplace describes guiding through a series of questions with multiple choices and after making selections, a finder searches a product database for any matching products. Accordingly, neither Matchmaker nor Manufacturing Marketplace, considered alone or in combination, describe or suggest the product matrix is responsively updated by removing the selected product configuration parameter from the product matrix. For the reasons set forth above, Claim 19 is submitted to be patentable over MatchMaker in view of Manufacturing Marketplace.

Claims 20-23 depend from independent Claim 19. When the recitations of Claims 20-23 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 19, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 20-23 likewise are patentable over MatchMaker in view of Manufacturing Marketplace.

Claim 25 recites a computer program product including "a storage medium readable by a processing circuit and storing for execution by the processing circuit: instructions for receiving a product category selection; instructions for matching the product category selection against a product database to determine a plurality of matched products; instructions for displaying product matrix comprising a product entry for each of the matched products, each product entry

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comprising a model identifier and at least one product configuration parameter associated with the matched products; instructions for presenting a product configuration question related to the at least one product configuration parameter displayed in the product matrix, wherein said instructions for presenting include instructions configured to present the product configuration question associated with a selected product configuration parameter chosen from the at least one product configuration parameter; instructions for receiving a product configuration answer; and instructions for responsively updating the product matrix based on the product configuration answer to eliminate at least one product entry in the product matrix, wherein the instructions for responsively updating include instructions configured to remove the selected product configuration parameter from the product matrix."

Neither MatchMaker nor Manufacturing Marketplace, considered alone or in combination, describe or suggest a computer program product as recited in Claim 25. Specifically, neither MatchMaker nor Manufacturing Marketplace, considered alone or in combination, describe or suggest instructions for responsively updating, where the instructions for responsively updating include instructions configured to remove the selected product configuration parameter from the product matrix. Rather, MatchMaker describes selecting a search category, seeing a product or a list of products that match search criteria, getting more information about a product/item by clicking on an item #, and choosing a search criteria that fits required specs from one of the categories. Manufacturing Marketplace describes guiding through a series of questions with multiple choices and after making selections, a finder searches a product database for any matching products. Accordingly, neither MatchMaker nor Manufacturing Marketplace, considered alone or in combination, describe or suggest instructions configured to remove as recited in Claim 25. For the reasons set forth above, Claim 25 is submitted to be patentable over MatchMaker in view of Manufacturing Marketplace.

Claim 27 is canceled. Claims 26 and 28 depend from independent Claim 25. When the recitations of Claims 26 and 28 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 25,

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Applicants submit that dependent Claims 26 and 28 likewise are patentable over MatchMaker in view of Manufacturing Marketplace.

For the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of Claims 1-3, 5-23, and 25-28 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) be withdrawn.

Applicants assume that Claims 30-45 are rejected as being unpatentable over MatchMaker in view of Manufacturing Marketplace, and further in view of Maytag.com, referred to as Maytag, Whirlpool.com, referred to as Whirlpool, Kenmore.com, referred to as Kenmore, and Frigidaire.com, referred to as Frigidaire, because the Office Action states on page 2, "The rejections as stated in the Non-Final Rejection(Paper # 18) are maintained". The non-final rejection states on pages 4-5, "Examiner would like to point out that all of the features used for product-selection as recited in the claims – such as temperature, color, energy efficiency ratio, etc. – are well-known in the art of household appliances to describe air conditioners, refrigerators, washers and dryers [See webpages excised from Maytag.com, Whirlpool.com, Kenmore.com and Frigidare.com] and would have been an obvious design choice by the catalog administrator in defining the parameters of each appliance...Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to store any data in the fields of the catalog – whether for a lamp, motor, air-conditioning unit or otherwise – for use in the product-finding MatchMaker system, as shown in Grainger, because such data does not functionally relate to the selection tool itself and merely labeling the data differently from that in the prior art would have been obvious matter of design choice."

MatchMaker and Manufacturing Marketplace are described above.

Whirlpool describes Whirlpool products, Kenmore describes Kenmore products, Frigidaire describes Frigidaire products, and Maytag describes Maytag products.

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Applicants respectfully re-submit that Whirlpool, Kenmore, Frigidaire, and Maytag are improper references because publication date of the references is November 24, 2003, which is not before the filing date, January 10, 2000, of the above-referenced application. For at least this reason, Claims 30-45 are submitted to be patentable over Matchmaker, in view of Manufacturing Marketplace, and further in view of Whirlpool, Kenmore, Frigidaire, and Maytag.

Claims 30-33 depend on independent Claim 1 which recites a method for production selection assistance, the method including "receiving a product category selection; matching the product category selection against a product database to determine a plurality of matched products; displaying a product matrix comprising a product entry for each of the matched products, each product entry comprising a model identifier and at least one product configuration parameter associated with the matched products; presenting a product configuration question relating to the at least one product configuration parameter displayed in the product matrix, wherein said presenting the product configuration question comprises presenting the product configuration question associated with a selected product configuration parameter chosen from the at least one product configuration parameter; receiving a product configuration answer; and responsively updating the product matrix based on the product configuration answer to eliminate at least one product entry in the product matrix, wherein said responsively updating comprises removing the selected product configuration parameter from the product matrix."

None of MatchMaker, Manufacturing Marketplace, Maytag, Kenmore, Whirlpool, and Frigidaire, considered alone or in combination, describe or suggest responsively updating the product matrix based on the product configuration answer to eliminate at least one product entry in the product matrix, where responsively updating includes removing the selected product configuration parameter from the product matrix. Rather, MatchMaker describes selecting a search category, seeing a product or a list of products that match search criteria, getting more information about a product/item by clicking on an item #, and choosing a search criteria that fits required specs from one of the categories. Manufacturing Marketplace describes guiding

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through a series of questions with multiple choices and after making selections, a finder searches a product database for any matching products. Whirlpool describes Whirlpool products, Kenmore describes Kenmore products, Frigidaire describes Frigidaire products, and Maytag describes Maytag products. For the reasons set forth above, Claim 1 is submitted to be patentable over MatchMaker, in view of Manufacturing Marketplace, and further in view of Maytag, Whirlpool, Kenmore, and Frigidaire.

When the recitations of Claims 30-33 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 1, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 30-33 likewise are patentable over MatchMaker, in view of Manufacturing Marketplace, and further in view of Maytag™, Whirlpool™, Kenmore™, and Frigidaire™.

Claims 34-37 depend on Claim 14 which recites a product selection assistance tool including "a communication interface; a processing circuit coupled to the communication interface; and a memory coupled to the processing circuit, the memory storing, for execution by the processing circuit, instructions for: receiving a product category selection over the communication interface; matching the product category selection against a product database to determine a plurality of matched products; displaying a product matrix comprising a product entry for each of the matched products, each product entry comprising a model identifier and at least one product configuration parameter associated with the matched products; presenting a product configuration question related to the at least one product configuration parameter displayed in the product matrix;-receiving a product configuration answer; and responsively updating the product matrix based on the product configuration answer to eliminate at least one product entry in the product matrix, the product configuration question based on a selected product configuration parameter chosen from the at least one product configuration parameter, wherein the instructions for responsively updating include instructions to remove the selected product configuration parameter from the product matrix."

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None of MatchMaker, Manufacturing Marketplace, Maytag, Kenmore, Whirlpool, and Frigidaire, considered alone or in combination, describe or suggest instructions to remove the selected product configuration parameter from the product matrix. Rather, MatchMaker describes selecting a search category, seeing a product or a list of products that match search criteria, getting more information about a product/item by clicking on an item #, and choosing a search criteria that fits required specs from one of the categories. Manufacturing Marketplace describes guiding through a series of questions with multiple choices and after making selections, a finder searches a product database for any matching products. Whirlpool describes Whirlpool products, Kenmore describes Kenmore products, Frigidaire describes Frigidaire products, and Maytag describes Maytag products. For the reasons set forth above, Claim 14 is submitted to be patentable over MatchMaker, in view of Manufacturing Marketplace, and further in view of Maytag, Whirlpool, Kenmore, and Frigidaire.

When the recitations of Claims 34-37 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 14, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 34-37 likewise are patentable over MatchMaker, in view of Manufacturing Marketplace, and further in view of Maytag, Whirlpool, Kenmore, and Frigidaire.

Claims 38-41 depend on Claim 19 which recites a product selection assistance Internet web page including "a matrix panel comprising a product matrix displaying a plurality of products using individual product entries comprising a model identifier and at least one product configuration parameter associated with the products; and a product configuration panel displaying a product configuration question and accepting a product configuration answer, the product matrix responsively updating based on the product configuration answer to eliminate at least one product entry in the product matrix, wherein the product configuration question relates to the at least one product configuration parameter displayed in the product matrix, the product configuration question based on a selected product configuration parameter chosen from the at

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least one product configuration parameter, and wherein the product matrix is responsively updated by removing the selected product configuration parameter from the product matrix."

None of MatchMaker, Manufacturing Marketplace, Maytag, Kenmore, Whirlpool, and Frigidaire, considered alone or in combination, describe or suggest the product matrix is responsively updated by removing the selected product configuration parameter from the product matrix. Rather, MatchMaker describes selecting a search category, seeing a product or a list of products that match search criteria, getting more information about a product/item by clicking on an item #, and choosing a search criteria that fits required specs from one of the categories. Manufacturing Marketplace describes guiding through a series of questions with multiple choices and after making selections, a finder searches a product database for any matching products. Whirlpool describes Whirlpool products, Kenmore describes Kenmore products, Frigidaire describes Frigidaire products, and Maytag describes Maytag products. For the reasons set forth above, Claim 19 is submitted to be patentable over MatchMaker, in view of Manufacturing Marketplace, and further in view of Maytag, Whirlpool, Kenmore, and Frigidaire.

When the recitations of Claims 38-41 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 19, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 38-41 likewise are patentable over MatchMaker, in view of Manufacturing Marketplace, and further in view of Maytag, Whirlpool, Kenmore, and Frigidaire.

Claims 42-45 depend on Claim 25 which recites a computer program product including "a storage medium readable by a processing circuit and storing for execution by the processing circuit: instructions for receiving a product category selection; instructions for matching the product category selection against a product database to determine a plurality of matched products; instructions for displaying product matrix comprising a product entry for each of the matched products, each product entry comprising a model identifier and at least one product configuration parameter associated with the matched products; instructions for presenting a

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product configuration question related to the at least one product configuration parameter displayed in the product matrix, wherein said instructions for presenting include instructions configured to present the product configuration question associated with a selected product configuration parameter chosen from the at least one product configuration parameter; instructions for receiving a product configuration answer; and instructions for responsively updating the product matrix based on the product configuration answer to eliminate at least one product entry in the product matrix, wherein the instructions for responsively updating include instructions configured to remove the selected product configuration parameter from the product matrix."

None of MatchMaker, Manufacturing Marketplace, Maytag, Kenmore, Whirlpool, and Frigidaire, considered alone or in combination, describe or suggest instructions for responsively updating, where the instructions for responsively updating include instructions configured to remove the selected product configuration parameter from the product matrix. Rather, MatchMaker describes selecting a search category, seeing a product or a list of products that match search criteria, getting more information about a product/item by clicking on an item #, and choosing a search criteria that fits required specs from one of the categories. Manufacturing Marketplace describes guiding through a series of questions with multiple choices and after making selections, a finder searches a product database for any matching products. Whirlpool describes Whirlpool products, Kenmore describes Kenmore products, Frigidaire describes Frigidaire products, and Maytag describes Maytag products. For the reasons set forth above, Claim 25 is submitted to be patentable over Manufacturing Marketplace, and further in view of Maytag, Whirlpool, Kenmore, and Frigidaire.

Claims 42-45 depend from independent Claim 25. When the recitations of Claims 42-45 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 25, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 42-45 likewise are patentable over Manufacturing Marketplace, and further in view of Maytag, Whirlpool, Kenmore, and Frigidaire.

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For the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of Claims 30-45 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) be withdrawn.

The rejection of Claims 4, 24, and 29 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Matchmaker in view of product finding service offered by Diane Trommer, "Raychem intros sourcing site", referred to as Raychem, in view of official notice regarding e-commerce website design, referred to as Website design official notice, is respectfully traversed.

Matchmaker is described above. Raychem describes a system that tells users how many products Raychem has that match specified criteria (page 1). Users can then click on the "compare products" link, which shows information on each of the identified products (page 1).

Claim 4 depends from Claim 1 which recites a method for production selection assistance, the method including "receiving a product category selection; matching the product category selection against a product database to determine a plurality of matched products; displaying a product matrix comprising a product entry for each of the matched products, each product entry comprising a model identifier and at least one product configuration parameter associated with the matched products; presenting a product configuration question relating to the at least one product configuration parameter displayed in the product matrix, wherein said presenting the product configuration question comprises presenting the product configuration question associated with a selected product configuration parameter chosen from the at least one product configuration parameter; receiving a product configuration answer; and responsively updating the product matrix based on the product configuration answer to eliminate at least one product entry in the product matrix, wherein said responsively updating comprises removing the selected product configuration parameter from the product matrix."

None of Matchmaker, Raychem, or the Website design official notice, considered alone or in combination, describe or suggest a method for production selection assistance as recited in Claim 1. Specifically, none of Matchmaker, Raychem, or the Website design official notice,

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considered alone or in combination, describe or suggest responsively updating the product matrix
based on the product configuration answer to eliminate at least one product entry in the product
matrix, where responsively updating includes removing the selected product configuration
parameter from the product matrix. Rather, MatchMaker describes selecting a search category,
seeing a product or a list of products that match search criteria, getting more information about a
product/item by clicking on an item #, and choosing a search criteria that fits required specs from
one of the categories. Raychem describes clicking on the "compare products" link, which shows
information on each of the identified products. For the reasons set forth above, Claim 1 is
submitted to be patentable over Matchmaker in view of Raychem and further in view of the
Website design official notice.

When the recitations of Claim 4 are considered in combination with the recitations of
Claim 1, Applicants submit that dependent Claim 4 likewise is patentable over Matchmaker in
view of Raychem and further in view of the Website design official notice.

Claim 24 depends from Claim 19 which recites a product selection assistance Internet
web page including "a matrix panel comprising a product matrix displaying a plurality of
products using individual product entries comprising a model identifier and at least one product
configuration parameter associated with the products; and a product configuration panel
displaying a product configuration question and accepting a product configuration answer, the
product matrix responsively updating based on the product configuration answer to eliminate at
least one product entry in the product matrix, wherein the product configuration question relates
to the at least one product configuration parameter displayed in the product matrix, the product
configuration question based on a selected product configuration parameter chosen from the at
least one product configuration parameter, and wherein the product matrix is responsively
updated by removing the selected product configuration parameter from the product matrix."

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None of Matchmaker, Raychem, or the Website design official notice, considered alone
or in combination, describe or suggest a product selection assistance Internet web page as recited
in Claim 19. Specifically, none of Matchmaker, Raychem, or the Website design official notice,
considered alone or in combination, describe or suggest the product matrix is responsively
updated by removing the selected product configuration parameter from the product matrix.
Rather, MatchMaker describes selecting a search category, seeing a product or a list of products
that match search criteria, getting more information about a product/item by clicking on an item
#, and choosing a search criteria that fits required specs from one of the categories. Raychem
describes clicking on the "compare products" link, which shows information on each of the
identified products. For the reasons set forth above, Claim 19 is submitted to be patentable over
Matchmaker in view of Raychem and further in view of the Website design official notice.

When the recitations of Claim 24 are considered in combination with the recitations of
Claim 19, Applicants submit that dependent Claim 24 likewise is patentable over Matchmaker in
view of Raychem and further in view of the Website design official notice.

Claim 29 depends from Claim 25 which recites a computer program product including "a
storage medium readable by a processing circuit and storing for execution by the processing
circuit: instructions for receiving a product category selection; instructions for matching the
product category selection against a product database to determine a plurality of matched
products; instructions for displaying product matrix comprising a product entry for each of the
matched products, each product entry comprising a model identifier and at least one product
configuration parameter associated with the matched products; instructions for presenting a
product configuration question related to the at least one product configuration parameter
displayed in the product matrix, wherein said instructions for presenting include instructions
configured to present the product configuration question associated with a selected product
configuration parameter chosen from the at least one product configuration parameter;
instructions for receiving a product configuration answer; and instructions for responsively

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updating the product matrix based on the product configuration answer to eliminate at least one product entry in the product matrix, wherein the instructions for responsively updating include instructions configured to remove the selected product configuration parameter from the product matrix."

None of Matchmaker, Raychem, or the Website design official notice, considered alone or in combination, describe or suggest a computer program product as recited in Claim 25. Specifically, none of Matchmaker, Raychem, or the Website design official notice, considered alone or in combination, describe or suggest instructions for responsively updating, where the instructions for responsively updating include instructions configured to remove the selected product configuration parameter from the product matrix. Rather, MatchMaker describes selecting a search category, seeing a product or a list of products that match search criteria, getting more information about a product/item by clicking on an item #, and choosing a search criteria that fits required specs from one of the categories. Raychem describes clicking on the "compare products" link, which shows information on each of the identified products. For the reasons set forth above, Claim 25 is submitted to be patentable over Matchmaker in view of Raychem and further in view of the Website design official notice.

When the recitations of Claim 29 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 25, Applicants submit that dependent Claim 29 likewise is patentable over Matchmaker in view of Raychem and further in view of the Website design official notice.

For the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of Claims 4, 24, and 29 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) be withdrawn.

The provisional rejections of Claims 1-13 and 30-33 under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over Claims 1-16 in copending U.S. Patent Application No. 09/681,393, of Claims 14-18 and 34-38 under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over Claims 17-29 in the
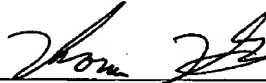
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copending U.S. Patent Application, and of Claims 25-29 and Claims 42-45 under the judicially
created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over Claims 30-35
in the copending U.S. Patent Application, is respectfully traversed. Claims 2, 15, and 27 are
canceled. Applicants respectfully submit Claims 1, 17, 30, and 36, in copending U.S. Patent
Application No. 09/681,393, were amended in an amendment mailed August 30, 2004. For at
least the reasons given above, Applicants respectfully request that the provisional double
patenting rejections of Claims 1-18, 25-38, and 42-45 be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing remarks, this application is believed to be in condition for
allowance. Reconsideration and favorable action is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully Submitted,

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